

**Advisory Council for the Education of
Students with Disabilities
Approved Minutes**

**July 24, 2006
TPS Campus, Hardison Building
1256 Foster Avenue
Nashville, TN 37243**

Members of the Council in Attendance

Dawn Bradley	Barbara Jenkins
David Blier	Cynthia Higginbotham
Paula Brownyard	Beulah Oldham
Samuel Cole	Fran Powers
Jeff Finney	Rex Roberts
Winnie Forrester	James Topp

Members of the Council not in Attendance

Tim Fite	Emily Lowrance
Kyle Hauth	Jennifer Partlow

State Employees in Attendance

Bob Blair, TN Department of Education/Division of Special Education (TDE/DSE)
Joseph Fisher, TDE/DSE
Juanita Flakes, TN Department of Human Services/Division of Rehabilitation Services (DHS/DRS)
Larry Greer, TDE/DSE
Ann Hampton, TDE/DSE
Jessica Harbison, TDE/DSE
Jamie Kilpatrick, TDE/DSE
Nan McKerley, TDE/DSE
Steve Sparks, TDE/DSE
Bill Wilson, TDE/DSE
Robert Winstead, TDE/DSE
Robert Yemm, TN Department of Finance & Administration

Visitors in Attendance

holly lu conant rees, Disability Coalition on Education
Susan Dalton, TN Education Association (TEA)
Kristi Hobbs, Special Education Teacher
Nancy Holland, Davison County Schools/TEA Special Education Ad Hoc Committee Chair
Loria Hubbard-Richardson, The Arc of Tennessee Project LINK
Dorisann Pell-McLean, TN Voices for Children
John Richardson
Walter Rogers, The Arc of Tennessee
Ned Solomon, Developmental Disabilities Council
Susie Wilkin, Franklin City Schools/TEA Special Education Ad Hoc Committee Member

Welcome

Dr. Topp called the meeting to order by having the Council members and guests recite the Pledge of Allegiance. Dr. Topp then welcomed a new member, Barbara Jenkins, and the group introduced themselves.

Approval of Agenda

The agenda was accepted without comment.

Approval of Minutes from April 24, 2006 meeting

The minutes of the January meeting were accepted as presented.

Report from the Chair

- The 2004-2005 Annual Report was distributed to the Council members and guests.
- With all Council members in agreement, the TDE/DSE website will be expanded to show member name, area of representation, geographical location and contact information.
- The Annual Conference Special Education for 2007 is scheduled for February 28 – March 2, 2007.
- In order for the Council to review the TDE/DSE Annual Performance Report before the deadline to submit to the Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP), the January meeting date was changed to January 8, 2007.
- Dr. Topp stressed the importance of member attendance to conduct Council business with the required quorum present.
- With two positions currently being considered by the Governor's Office, new member orientation will be scheduled after a decision has been made. New members may attend the TDE/DSE Special Education Supervisors Conference in October.

Public Input

There were none present who wished to address the Council.

Reimbursement Requests on High Cost Students with Disabilities

Nan McKerley explained that, in accordance with the 2004 reauthorization of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), all states were required to develop a mechanism by which schools could get relief for high cost students with disabilities. The TDE/DSE already had this mechanism in place; however, were required to adopt the federal formula – Priority 3 for students who require 3 times to state average expenditure (approximately 3 million was allocated for this category this year); Priority 2 for state agency (i.e. Mental Health, DCS, etc.) placed students; and Priority 1 for TDE schools (i.e. TN School for the Blind, TN School for the Deaf, West TN School for the Deaf, etc.) to assist with transportation costs, etc. There is also a Priority 4 category for very high cost children with disabilities who are the responsibility of the school system when the cost excess cost is 250% greater than the total funds to be deducted on a specific student. When applying for Priority 4, school systems will be allowed a maximum of .03% of the December 1 census count for total number of children served. Proposed funds were approved by OSEP too late to be applied for or used by schools this year.

A Special Education Teaching Perspective on the TN Youth Leadership Forum

Kristi Hobbs, a special education teacher from Coffee County/Manchester City, was then introduced. She presented on the TN Youth Leadership Forum from her point of view after attending as a chaperone for one of her students. Ned Solomon had presented on the TN Youth Leadership Forum in January.

TEA's Look Into Inclusion Practices in TN

Nancy Holland, Davison County Schools/TEA Special Education Ad Hoc Committee Chair, reported to the Council the preliminary results of a recent online survey of TEA members. The survey was suggested at an assembly of TEA representatives to look at inclusion. This questionnaire sought teacher opinions about the practice of inclusion across TN. This was not a survey of a scientifically selected random sample of TEA members or TN teachers. Respondents self-selected. There has been a 3% response rate with a response from each LEA.

Department Update

Ann Hampton began the update on TDE activities by reporting that Joseph Fisher and Bill Wilson will be in Washington, D.C. the last week of August for the rollout of the new federal regulations governing special education. Department activities relating to Council Goals 1, 3 and 6 will be looked at during the October meeting with Council Goal 4 in January.

Jamie Kilpatrick, newly appointed Director of the TDE/DSE Office of Early Childhood Programs, was introduced to speak about activities relating to Council Goal 2 – “Promote expanded access to and quality of services to eligible children and youth with disabilities to better prepare them for transition into their future environments.” The Office of Early Childhood Programs has been restructured to better serve the public and provide a customer service approach and help avoid the two major pitfalls of early childhood transition: overlooking awareness of the issue and communication breakdowns. Quarterly and monthly updates will be provided through the 9 different regional offices across the state by service provider on birth to 3 training and accountability reports, which will be shared with LEAs. The TN Early Intervention Data System (TEIDS) being developed by YahaSoft, Inc. as a link to the Easy IEP component of the statewide student data management system will also help increase communication when transitioning services for children entering school.

Steve Sparks, Director of the TDE/DSE Office of Compliance Monitoring, presented findings of monitoring done by his office for the 2005-2006 school year in relation to the Council Goals. Based on requirements of the federal indicator of the State Performance Plan/Annual Performance Report, a student exit survey was conducted in the LEAs which showed that:

- 104 of 488 (21%) were enrolled in some type of post secondary schooling.
- 271 of 488 (56%) were currently employed in a paid job.
- 432 of 488 (89%) were involved in developing their transition planning.
- 188 of 488 (39%) were involved in Work Based Learning Programming.
- 349 of 488 (72%) felt that high school programming prepared them for post school activities.

A total of 13 out of 42 school systems (31%) monitored were found to be in need of improvement in the area of providing a Free Appropriate Public Education (FAPE) in the Least Restrictive Environment (LRE). LEA Improvement Plans for each identified category were reviewed by the compliance monitoring staff and will be followed up on in the 2006-2007 monitoring cycle to ensure their implementation within one (1) year of identification.

Kathy Strunk, Director of the State Improvement Grant (SIG), addressed the council to outline the ways the SIG works to accomplish each of the Advisory Council Goals. Providing professional development; collaborating with Institutions of Higher Education to develop high quality teacher training programs; communicating with school personnel, higher education, faculty, families and the general public via newsletters, websites and listservs.

Annual Goals

Paula Brownyard then presented the goals proposed by the New Goals Subcommittee for 2006-2007. No major changes were made to the goals from the 2005-2006 school year; however, the actions to be taken in order to carry out the goals were revised. The Council voted to adopt the new goals as presented with a final vote to be conducted in October leaving open for comments and adaptation during that meeting.

Legislative Update

Bill Wilson informed the Council that no new legislation directly affects special education although there are some items under consideration that would affect education in general.

Other New Business

The Council set the following meeting dates for the next year:

October 23, 2006

January 8, 2007 (note: this is a change as discussed in the Report from the Chair)

April 23, 2007

July 23, 2007

Dr. Topp then adjourned the meeting.